

REMARKS

Claims 1-10 and 12 were allowed.

Claim 11 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Ohnuki (US 6,652,298). The examiner is requested to reconsider this rejection.

"A claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference." *Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Co. of California*, 814 F.2d 628, 631, 2 USPQ2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987). It is submitted that Ohnuki fails to teach each and every element as set forth in claim 11 for at least the reasons described below.

Applicants have amended claim 11 to recite, *inter alia*, "a first housing having a back side and an opposing first contact, wherein the first housing comprises a bearing sleeve open to the back side of the first housing ... a cross slider disposed between the first housing and the second housing, wherein the cross slider comprises a slot having an open end, and wherein the open end is open to the back side of the first housing and a lever having a bearing tab and a guide tab, wherein the bearing tab is configured to be received by the bearing sleeve when the bearing tab is inserted into the bearing sleeve at the back side of the first housing, and wherein the guide tab is configured to be insertable into the open end of the slot".

In contrast, Ohnuki merely discloses a connector 3 comprising a first casing portion 14 having a short (open) sidewall 14c


(allowing for connection to the plug contacts 2) and an adjacent opening portion 14d. The back side (opposite side from sidewall 14c) forms a closed end of the first casing portion 14, and the connector components are only accessible through the opening portion 14d (see Figs. 1, 2, 4, 10, 11, and 14). Additionally, the engaging plate 9 comprises slotted features that are either open towards the plug contacts 2 (engaging grooves 33, 34), or are closed on both ends (oblong hole 35) (see Fig. 2 and col. 7, lines 8-10). Furthermore, the swinging axes 10c and the drive protrusions 10d of the lever 10 are inserted into attachment holes 31 and arc-shaped holes 32 of the first casing portion 14 (see Figs. 1 and 2, and col. 9, lines 61-65). The attachment holes 31 and arc-shaped holes 32 are located on a top sidewall 14a of the first casing portion. Ohnuki does not teach or suggest any features which are open to the back side of the first casing portion 14.

Thus, Ohnuki fails to teach "a bearing sleeve open to the back side of the first housing ... a slot having an open end ... open to the back side of the first housing ... wherein the cross slider comprises a slot having an open end, and wherein the open end is open to the back side of the first housing and a lever having a bearing tab and a guide tab, wherein the bearing tab is configured to be received by the bearing sleeve when the bearing tab is inserted into the bearing sleeve at the back side of the first housing, and wherein the guide tab is configured to be insertable into the open end of the slot", as claimed in amended claim 11. Accordingly, claim 11 is patentable over the art of record and should be allowed.

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For all of the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims now present in the application are clearly novel and patentable over the prior art of record. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration and allowance is respectfully requested. Should any unresolved issue remain, the examiner is invited to call applicants' attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,



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9/14/07

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